

Public Cheat Sheet: Social Media for News

Started by: Former Reuters Social Media Editor, Current Strategy Editor for WSJ

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Twitter

- Build lists of sources using Twitter lists. Use this to get ahead of your competition, news breaks on Twitter more often now than it does on mainstream news sources. ([How to create Twitter Lists](#))
- [Use these resources](#) to find sources that are authoritative/influential in your area to help build your list of sources.
- Follow accounts that help inform you about the topics you cover and retweet important news they share to inform your followers. Retweet your competition, if you're sharing the best news from everywhere, people will follow you for everything they need to know. But, as important as aggregation is, be sure to post original content as well.
- Use TweetDeck or HootSuite.com to monitor multiple lists on one screen, I prefer the [TweetDeck](#) because it has more options.
- Handcraft your tweets for all your new articles. Ask questions. "Do you agree with my take here?" "Is _____ the next great point guard?" Questions have the highest engagement and will help build your audience. (But if you ask questions, have some intention of using the feedback in some way - otherwise it's faux engagement)
- Share interesting articles by other people. Retweet great articles that they link to on their own Twitter accounts.
- Use hashtags like [#Covid19](#) [#LGM](#) [#FinTwit](#) related to your topic etc so your tweets are seen by a larger audience. Communities like [#FinTwit](#) have rich, long-running groups that congregate and discuss shared interests on Twitter.
- Use cashtags when talking about publicly traded companies so those tweets enter feeds where people are looking for and sharing information about them. [\\$AAPL](#) for Apple, [\\$MSFT](#) for Microsoft, for example
- Do Twitter searches ([search.twitter.com](#)) and look up the subjects you write about. Respond to people who tweet about things you're writing about, get their attention. Don't link them to your articles right away, build a relationship over time and they'll follow you and get the links by following your feed.
- Use [Twitter Advanced Search](#) for old tweets that you might need.
- Sign up for a free [@muckrack](#) account and get daily digests of top

journalists' tweets about your subject of interest. Crucial for journos & PR pros.

- Use [MuckRack.com](http://muckrack.com) as a way to find journalists [by company](#) or [by beat](#) and add them to Twitter lists to monitor news that breaks in those topics.
- Consider balancing the types of tweets with a ratio of posts addressing: (1) what you do; (2) what you love; and (3) who you are.
- Use a URL shortening service, like <http://bit.ly> so you maximize the room you have to share information in your tweets and so you can track how many people are clicking and sharing your tweet. Try to keep your Tweets under 120 characters so others can add comments to your tweet in a RT.
- [Be careful about the sources you find on Twitter](#). Verify before you retweet and add a caveat if you're unsure. When in doubt, don't tweet and spread misinformation, dig deeper and verify first. There's no harm in asking questions, sometimes crowdsourcing can help verify. "Is _____ a legitimate account/source?" Consider using a service like [Storyful](#) to help verify socially sourced reports.
- Credit your sources with a hat tip, a retweet, anything. People are appreciative to see their content (or their find) shared.
- [Use @FEMA format](#) to date/time stamp breaking news, e.g. 6/1 12:32pm EDT, and include ORIGINAL date/time with RTs. Late RTs add to confusion and put lives at risk in a dynamic situation such as dangerous weather.
- To find photos and video on Twitter, use "filter:photos" "filter:videos" when searching.

Facebook

- Turn on Subscribe feature on your personal Facebook. This will let you share stuff you only want to share with the people who you want to receive it.
- Run polls asking people what they think about a specific story or subject. In a sports example, who do they think is the best player at any given position, or anything else that will drive debate and comments. Be provocative, get them to think and weigh in.
- Post videos and photos, don't just make it a feed with all links to your articles. Mix it up.
- Find Facebook Groups related to the subjects you cover. Get involved in the conversations there. Over time they'll head to your page and then to your website and you'll build up a readership.
- There are close to a billion people on Facebook, it's a huge driver of traffic

once you get the ball rolling. It won't happen overnight but it's worth putting in the time because you'll eventually have a reliable major source of traffic to your website.

Tumblr

- Get on Tumblr and share your articles. Follow people who write about the topics you cover, follow people who blog about college sports if that's your focus. Replog their posts and they'll follow you back.
- I try to replog and share more than I post of my own. I do about a 40/60 split between my content and the content I share of others. (I used to run <http://sbnation.tumblr.com>)
- Use the track feature, in the sidebar, to keep up with posts in relevant tags.
- Tag your posts #gif #tech #news #politics #news #sports #collegefb #collegebb #basketball #football etc so they're seen by tag editors who will then promote them on the respective tag pages. You can find widely used tags at <http://www.tumblr.com/explore>.

Pinterest

- Originate all pins to places on your Website or social sites so that re-pins always come back to you.

Quora

- A place to ask questions and showcase your knowledge on a subject.
- One example of a great, useful Quora thread: [How does an investigative reporter get started?](#)
- Could also be used for readers to ask questions to understand more about complicated subjects: [What exactly is a Credit Default Swap?](#)

Other

- [Kate Gardiner](#) has put together a spectacular [list of useful social media tools for newsroom](#)
- Keep an eye on your competitors. Watch what they're doing, steal some of their good ideas and put your own spin on them. Over time you'll build a friendly relationship with some of them and they may actually link to your stuff, you should do the same. There's a link economy when it comes to blogs and it's built on sharing each other's stuff, it helps make your own content stronger and more well rounded and vice versa.

- Using a tool like [TrendSpottr](#) for real-time viral content discovery can also help to identify emerging stories that have high viral potential and engagement. It identifies the top trending content (links, hashtags, sources) for any keyword, topic or even Twitter list URL. GT example, this is a [link](#) to find the most trending content about Syria in real time. For HootSuite users, TrendSpottr is also available in HootSuite's new [App Directory](#). Useful [overview videos](#) also available.
- Use [Storyful.com/pro](#) to help verify reports and tweets you see on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. Follow @StoryfulPro on Twitter to see alerts, curated Twitter Lists and links to verified content on <http://storyful.com/pro> Requests and questions can be sent to Storyful's global team of curators 24/7 on curator@storyful.com
- Consider offering readers a way to ask questions and receive a video answer. Answers can be archived and accessed by other readers. Can eventually act as an FAQ. Start a YouTube channel to provide these videos, or maybe use TikTok, or Instagram.
- [SiloBraker](#): Very useful tool that allows to dynamically build a network of topics and people, starting from a simple search. It gives also direct access to all the information published worldwide and captured in the network. For example searching: "Apple Inc" you will find interesting articles linking both Apple and Android or with the supply chain workers.